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SAMPLING PROCEDURE OF LITHUANIAN INTEREST GROUPS SURVEY[1]

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[1] This material is prepared based on the following document: Fink-Hafner, D., Hafner-Fink, M., Novak, M., Kronegger, L., Lajh, D. and Železnik, A. (2015) *Conducting the survey- The organizational development of national interest groups in a European comparative perspective: Slovenia,* Ljubljana: Centre for Political Science Research.

In this memo we briefly present the procedure followed to form a population of national interest groups in Lithuania for conducting web survey among them.

Working definition of interest groups

We understand interest groups in a broad sense as organized groups that meet the following criteria: it is a voluntary formal membership-based organization that brings together individuals with common interests or goals to represent them; it has characteristics of an organization, their activities are carried in accordance of certain rules (statutes, regulations). These groups are either politically active or their political activity is latent. Politically active groups seek to influence various government decisions but not seek political power. The latent groups have the capacity and interest to be politically active. Although most of their activity is not political, they could become politically active upon coming across a political issue within their interests.

Selecting the units

We used a bottom-up approach to form the population of national interest groups. Our main source for defining the population is a directory of Lithuanian business entities www.rekvizitai.lt. The reason behind selecting this business directory is twofold. First, there are no official and publicly available interest group registers of any kind. Neither there are previous studies that could be used as starting point to form a sample of national interest groups. Second, the business directory we used proved to be the largest and most comprehensive.

The sampling procedure consisted of five manually carried out steps.

Step 1: In the first step, we selected 13 215 national, regional and local organizations under the category 'unions, funds, associations' from the directory of Lithuanian business entities.

Step 2: In the second step, we left only those organizations which are national (regional and local interest groups were excluded) and meet our definition of an interest group. In this step, we used manual selection procedure. All the local organizations, non-active organizations and organizations that are not interest groups were removed from the list. This left us with 3540 national interest groups.

Step 3: In this step, we supplemented the remaining sample of organizations with the lists of interest organizations provided by ten Lithuanian ministries (Ministry of Health, Ministry of National Defense, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of

Agriculture, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Social Security and Labour, and Ministry of Energy) as well as the State Consumer Rights Protection Authority.

Lastly, the list was complemented with the additional interest groups, which did not appear in the original list but were known to the research team as active in the public policy process. This left us with 3628 interest groups operating at the national level.

Step 4: In the fourth step, each interest group has been checked again manually according to two essential criteria - whether the organization has a website (or at least active *Facebook* account) and whether their statutes identified characteristic features of an interest group, such as: an attempt to represent members of the organization, to defend their rights, to promote groups' values and goals, to influence public policy. We ended up having a sample of 1241 organization.

Step 5: In the fifth sampling step, each previously selected interest group has been double-checked by another team member. This step also included identifying double entries in this list (we found many double entries and this is due to the fact that organizations are themselves responsible for the registration and entering information in the directory). This left us with the final sample of 904 organizations.

Selection steps and number of units

	Number of units
Step 1	13215
Step 2	3540
Step 3	3628
Step 4	1241
Step 5	904

The remaining organizations were then coded by their age, group type, public policy type, membership type (organizational, individual, mixed) and number of members.

Final sample by group type

Group type	Frequency	Percentage
Trade unions	43	4.7
Professional associations	271	30.0
Business groups (associations)	233	25.8
Institutional associations	33	3.6
Identity groups	128	14.2
Hobby/leisure groups	93	10.3
Public interest groups	59	6.5
Other groups	44	4.9
Total	904	100